

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, favorable reconsideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-5, 7-10, 26, and 27 are currently pending.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the batting board is characterized by the absence of starch. Support for this amendment can be found, for example, on pages 2-4 of the present application. In particular, pages 3 and 4 discuss that the use of methylcellulose and methylcellulose derivatives as a binder provides a batting board having a uniform density. In contrast, it is noted on page 2 that binders comprising starch have non-uniform densities that result in difficulties in machining the batting board. As such, one of ordinary skill in the art would appreciate that the claimed invention provides a rigidized batting board that is rigidized in the absence of a starch.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1-5 and 7-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the combination of Olson in view DeJager. Claims 26 and 27 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the combination of Olson, DeJager, and Bompard.

Amended Claim 1 recites that the batting board is characterized by the absence of a starch. As discussed on page 2 of the present application, the presence of starch is undesirable because it is not uniformly distributed through the batting board. As a result, the batting board is difficult to machine to have an exact thickness. The claimed invention uses methyl cellulose based binder that is uniformly distributed through the batting board and does not include a starch.

Olson describes a high strength batting board that comprises ceramic fibers, polyvinyl alcohol fiber, cationic starch, clay fillers, and colloidal silica. See Abstract. In particular, Olson describes using PVA and starch as the binder. Olson does not disclose or suggest a batting board that is characterized by the absence of a starch.

DeJager does not cure this deficiency of Olson. DeJager lists a broad array of various binders including waxes, polyolefins, polyacrylates, carbonates, to name but a few. In fact,

methycellulose is barely mentioned in passing. Given the broad possible binders listed in DeJager, there is no teaching or suggestion that would lead one of ordinary skill in the art to eliminate starch as a binder, or that starch is undesirable. Accordingly, the combination of DeJager and Olson fails to disclose or suggest a fiber board that is characterized by the absence of starch.

With respect to dependent Claim 10, Olson does not disclose or suggest a batting board having a density of between about 8 lbs/ft³ and about 12 lbs/ft³. Although Olson states that the ceramic fiber board can have a density less than 22 lbs/ft³, it is clear that Olson does not disclose or suggest a batting board having a density between about 8 lbs/ft³ and about 12 lbs/ft³, as recited in Claim 10. At best, Olson teaches a density of 18 lbs/ft³, which is still significantly higher than the density recited in Claim 10. DeJager does not cure this deficiency of Olson. As pointed out in Applicant's previous response of May 26, 2006, DeJager clearly does not disclose or suggest a structure having the claimed density. Further, Olson includes additional components, such as clay fillers, colloidal silica, PVA fibers, and starch, which would necessarily increase the density of the fiber board. The Examiner provides no account for how the presence of these components can be accounted for in arriving at the claimed density. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the combination of DeJager and Olson fails to disclose the claimed invention recited in Claim 10.

With respect to Claims 26 and 27, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to modify Olson in view of the teachings of Bompard as contemplated by the Examiner. Olson describes a ceramic fiber board having a polyvinyl alcohol (PVA) binder that dissolves when heated and has a density that is less than 22 lb/ft³. Intended uses for Olson's fiber boards include high temperature insulation applications such as steel splash boards, oven or furnace linings, casting setters or casting tips. Bompard is not directed to insulative fiber boards or insulative applications. Rather, Bompard is directed to relatively heavy and dense composite sheet material that can be useful for making fiber reinforced material parts, such as boat masts. Anyone with knowledge of boat masts would quickly appreciate that the construction of a boat mast is completely different than a material to be used in an insulative capacity. As such, the teachings of Bompard are directed to a significantly different objective and purpose than that of Olson and

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one of ordinary skill in the art to which Olson is directed would not look to guidance from Bompard in the production of insulative fiber boards. Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated to combine their disparate teachings, and therefore would not be motivated to modify the fiber board of Olson in view of the teachings of Bompard.

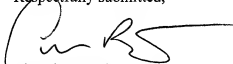
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103 have been overcome.

Conclusion

In view of the amendments and remarks made above, Applicant submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests that the claims be allowed to issue. If the Examiner wishes to discuss the application or the comments herein, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone at 704-444-1185 to expedite prosecution of this application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



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